

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 05733 270751Z

14

ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

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USDOCOSOUTH

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CINCUSAFE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ANKARA 5733

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MPOL, TU

SUBJ: NEW AIR FORCE COMMANDER APPOINTED

REF: ANKARA 5512 (DTG 191335Z JUL 76)

1. PRESIDENT KORUTURK JULY 23 SIGNED AND PROMULGATED A DECISION APPOINTING GENERAL ETHEM AYAN AS AIR FORCE COMMANDER. AYAN'S APPOINTMENT, WHICH HAS BEEN PROPOSED BY TURKISH GENERAL STAFF CHIEF SANCAR AND APPROVED BY MINDEF MELEN AND PRIMIN DEMIREL, IS IN KEEPING WITH HIGH MILITARY ADMINISTRATIVE COURT RULING OF JULY 16 WHICH VOIDED THE APPOINTMENT OF LT. GEN. CEMAL ENGIN AS AIR FORCE COMMANDER. (BASIS OF DECISION WAS THAT ENGIN, NOT BEING A FULL GENERAL, WAS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 ANKARA 05733 270751Z

APPOINTMENT.) ENGIN HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO A NEWLY CREATED

POSITION AS AIR ADVISOR TO THE DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE
GENERAL STAFF.

2. GENERAL AYAN IS ONE OF TWO FOUR-STAR AIR FORCE
GENERALS WHO WERE ON ACTIVE DUTY WHEN GENERAL ALPKAYA RESIGNED
AS TAF COMMANDER IN MARCH. GENERAL OZAYDINLI WAS THE MORE
SENIOR AND THE LOGICAL CANDIDATE TO REPLACE ALPKAYA, BUT
BECAUSE OF OZAYDINLI'S ALLEGED POLITICAL INCLINATIONS, THE
GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO BY-PASS BOTH HIM AND AYAN
TO NAME ENGIN, THE SENIOR THREE-STAR AIR FORCE GENERAL
ON ACTIVE DUTY. OZAYDINLI APPEALED THE DECISION AND WON
HIS CASE BUT LOST THE POSITION. HIS LAWYERS WERE QUOTED
IN TURKISH PRESS JULY 25 SAYING THAT OZAYDINLI PLANS TO
SUE PRINCE DEMIREL FOR "MORAL DAMAGES".

3. COMMENT: AYAN'S APPOINTMENT MAY BRING AN
END TO MOST OF THE CONTROVERSY THAT HAS RESULTED FROM
ALPKAYA'S RESIGNATION AND THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT'S
HANDLING OF THE NAMING OF A SUCCESSOR. THE TIMING OF
THE APPOINTMENT, COINCIDENT WITH THE SAILING OF THE
SISMİK GEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SHIP, WHETHER DILIBERATE OR
NOT, MAY TEND TO LIMIT PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND COMMENTARY.
MACOMBER

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